



MNPD NEWSLINE

THE OFFICIAL EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER OF THE MNPD

February 22, 2008

News from the Chief

The tremendous work of officers and professional support staff across the police department, combined with the strong community partnerships we have formed in neighborhoods throughout the city, led to Nashville's 4th consecutive year of overall crime reduction. Last year's major crime total was 2.1% below that of 2006 and is at a 17-year low.

The 2007 **overall crime rate**, which is based on Nashville's population estimates, was the lowest since 1989. The **violent crime rate** last year was the lowest since 1990. The **property crime rate** was the lowest since 1979. The **auto theft rate** was the lowest in the history of the Metropolitan government.

While that is good news for our city as a whole, significant challenges persist in 2008. Among them are our continuing efforts to deal with repeat offenders who refuse to be rehabilitated, as well as those teenagers who choose crime over education. I strongly believe the tough new Crooks with Guns law will make Nashville an ever safer place this year. The statute dictates minimum mandatory prison sentences for persons who commit violent felonies or drug crimes while carrying firearms. Between January 1 and Wednesday of this week, our officers had charged 29 persons under the Crooks with Guns law. As for juvenile crime, I am very optimistic Mayor Dean's initiative to reduce the teenage dropout rate, coupled with the police department's continuing outreach to the clergy and other community groups, will have an impact on the gang and other negative influences young people face.

Recruitment and retention, along with advocating for an evolving and outstanding pay and benefits package, also remain high on my and the department's priority list. Our aggressive hiring practices continue to meet with success. A class of 56 trainees began at the academy on Tuesday. Another recruit class is planned for June. I am optimistic that the department will be very close to our authorized sworn strength of 1,312 by year's end.

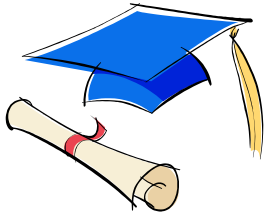
Thank you for all that you do. You truly are making a difference in the lives of Nashville's families and guests.

Happenings

Mayor Karl Dean and Chief Ronal Serpas Tuesday welcomed the 56 members of Police Recruit Class 57. This is the largest class to begin the Metro Police Academy in nearly three years. Also pictured are the 32 members of Recruit Class 56 who will graduate next month.



Session 57 began training on Tuesday, February 19 with 56 MNPD trainees and six VPD trainees.



Session 56 Graduation Ceremonies
Thursday, March 6
6 p.m. at Madison Church of Christ
106 N. Gallatin Pike

Polar Bear Plunge

Thanks to all who participated in the 9th Annual Polar Bear Plunge February 16 at Nashville Shores on Percy Priest Lake. Over \$12,000 was raised to benefit Tennessee Special Olympics.



Brrrrrrrrrrrr!

East Precinct Sergeant Anna-Maria Williams made the plunge dressed as Xena Warrior Princess after raising \$2,600 in donations!



Pictured (l-r) are Sgt. Anna-Maria Williams and the Nashville Fire Department's Paul Thompson.



Recruitment teamed up with the MNPD's Metro Law Dawgs football team at Hunters Lane High School February 16 during a semi-pro football league game.

The MNPd hockey team has moved into a tie for first place in their league. Fans are encouraged to attend their game Sunday at Centennial Sportsplex at 222 25th Avenue North. The puck drops at 3:40 p.m.



The Precinct News

Hermitage

A man, who threatened a neighbor at gunpoint for looking at his car, is charged with violating the Crooks with Guns law and marijuana possession in a drug-free school zone.

Seized during a consent search of the man's apartment were a loaded handgun, 144 grams of cocaine, ten grams of marijuana packaged for resale, and \$3,072 cash. He is being held in lieu of \$136,000 bond.

Outstanding police work led to the arrest of seven juveniles, ages 14-17, who are charged with burglarizing homes in the Priest Lake area during school hours.

South

An investigation by Detective Andy Belew led to the arrest of a man on the precinct's Top Ten Most Wanted list for burglarizing a business on Bell Road.

Due to Detective Belew's persistent efforts, Bryan Eason was taken into custody without incident at his place of employment.

Commander Mike Alexander on February 12 met with nearly 40 ministers representing a variety of churches in an effort to build long-term partnerships to enhance the safety of the community.

As a result of the meeting, South Precinct officers are expected to become more involved with church outreach programs, particularly those designed to serve at-risk youth.

East

Officer Kevin Allen stopped a driver for not wearing her seatbelt on Main Street at South 5th Street. The passenger had an outstanding warrant for contempt of court. He was taken into custody and found to be in possession of marijuana and two Percocet pills. Seized in a subsequent search of the car were 2.6 grams of methamphetamine.

The driver had a loaded handgun in her waistband. She admitted the meth and drug paraphernalia were hers. She also told Officer Allen she had been selling the drug for two years. She was charged with violating the Crooks with Guns law and possession of methamphetamine in a drug-free school zone.

East Precinct officers arrested a convicted felon shortly after he stabbed an elderly man during a burglary.

Jerry Clemmons, 36, is accused of entering a Rosebank Avenue residence through a kitchen window at 4:30 a.m. A 77-year-old man and his 70-year-old wife reported Clemmons confronted them in their bedroom and demanded money. The elderly man struggled with Clemmons and was stabbed once in his side. He was transported to Vanderbilt University Medical Center with non-life threatening injuries.

Clemmons fled on foot to his nearby residence in the 2600 block of Carter Avenue where he was arrested. Clemmons told investigators he knocked on the elderly couple's door to ask for money.

Clemmons is charged with especially aggravated burglary and is being held in lieu of \$100,000 dollars bond. His arrest history reflects 61 prior offenses. He was convicted of aggravated assault in 2006.

North

North Precinct detectives determined that a man arrested for an apartment burglary is responsible for a dozen Madison business break-ins and nine burglaries of Madison apartment homes.

Michael D. Robinson, 32, of Doverside Drive, entered the businesses primarily by smashing windows. He would look for cash and quickly flee. He entered the apartments by kicking in doors and would look for valuables he could easily take away. He used the money to buy crack cocaine. He would sell the stolen items for cash or trade them for crack.

A teen driver was charged with unlawful weapon and drug possession after he was stopped for speeding on Augusta Drive at Dunbar Drive.

Officers detected a strong odor of marijuana as they approached the car. A handgun and marijuana were recovered from the Toyota Corolla. The 18-year-old driver is charged with unlawful weapon and drug possession.

West

Officer Joe Hooper stopped a Chevrolet Tahoe in the 2700 block of Herman Street for a window tint violation. Seized in a consent search were 3.5 grams of cocaine, 1.5 grams of marijuana, the SUV, and \$3,431 cash. The driver is charged with two counts of felony drug possession.

Outstanding police work led to the February 17 arrest of a purse snatcher who was subsequently charged in two separate robberies.

The victim was putting her purchases into her car in the parking lot of Target on White Bridge Road when Mathis Martin, 47, stole her purse. He fled in a Ford Taurus. A description of Martin and his getaway car were immediately broadcast. Officer Julio Gautreaux located the vehicle within minutes and took the suspect into custody without incident.

Items from the victim's purse were located inside the Taurus. Martin was positively identified by the victim as the man who took her purse and is charged with theft in that case.

Additionally, he is charged with robbing a clerk February 15 at the Piggly Wiggly at 3611 Gallatin Pike and robbing a woman at knifepoint February 11.

Central

Officer Jason Cregan saw two people behaving suspiciously in a parked car in the 800 block of 5th Avenue South. Officer Cregan detected a strong odor of marijuana as he approached the two men. Seized in a subsequent search were approximately 56 grams of marijuana packaged for resale. Both suspects are charged with felony marijuana possession.

Interdiction Unit

A Texas man arrested January 4 after \$80,000 cash was found hidden in the car he was driving agreed to plead guilty to conspiracy to commit money laundering.

Rogelio Rodriguez, 21, of El Paso, driving a 2007 Chrysler 300, was pulled over on I-40 east near McCrory Lane by the police department's Interstate Interdiction Unit for following too closely. Rodriguez consented to a search of the car. Found in clothing, under the back seat, and inside the air filter under the hood were several bundles of money totaling \$80,000. The investigation revealed the cash had a direct connection to Nashville area drug sales and was on its way to Mexico.

As part of his plea agreement, Rodriguez forfeited the money. He will be on probation for three years.

On January 18, the driver of a passenger bus was pulled over on I-40 east near Charlotte Pike by the police department's Interstate Interdiction Unit for a traffic violation at 11:30 a.m.

The driver and passengers consented to a search of the bus. Found in luggage located in the baggage compartment were eleven pounds of marijuana.

A passenger, Benito Tijerina, 21, of Brownsville, Texas, admitted the luggage was his and that he was delivering the marijuana to Indianapolis. Tijerina is charged with felony marijuana possession.

The driver and remaining passengers were allowed to continue on to Indianapolis.

**The following officers in the Field Operation Bureau were chosen Patrol,
Police, Investigator, and Special Operations Officer
of the Month for January 2008**

Patrol Officer of the Month

East Precinct Officer Richard Lowry

Police Officer of the Month

West Precinct Officers Scott Cothran, Kevin Guyton, Steven Parks,
Ryan Perkins, and Curtis Watkins.

Investigator of the Month

Central Precinct Detectives Rick Mavity and Ricky Winfrey

Special Operations Officer of the Month

Traffic Division Officer Coleman Womack

Congratulations:

Detective Joe Siminok, 20th Judicial Task Force, and his wife, Ashley, are the proud parents of a baby girl born February 21.



Condolences:

Robert Walsh, the son of Officer Tommy Walsh, Property and Evidence, passed away February 21.

FYI:

From the District Attorney's Office

Officers:

If you are investigating a juvenile for a violent crime such as murder or aggravated robbery and have any questions at all, please call Kathy Morante at the District Attorney's Office. She is now handling these cases and would be happy to discuss any questions about juvenile law or procedure with you. Her numbers are 862-8096 (o) and 294-7452 (c).

Remember that once juveniles are taken to the Juvenile Justice Center, officers may not interview them further. Also, the recent trend of obtaining juvenile arrest warrants from the night commissioner is problematic for a number of reasons. Please speak with General Morante before taking this course of action. Thank you.

Flexible Spending Accounts

Human Resources Manager Sue Bibb

We have had numerous inquiries from employees concerning the discontinuance of debit cards for our Flexible Spending Accounts.

Please review the information below. If you have any questions please contact Metro HR representative Justin Stack at 862-6640 ext.72248.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY FUNDS LEFT IN YOUR FSA ACCOUNT FROM 2007 MUST BE USED BY MARCH 15 2008 OR THEY WILL BE LOST.

We have another very important update relating to all employees who had the FSA debit card in 2007. You may have been hearing from some of your employees who state that their debit card has been de-activated. This is true. They were de-activated at the end of the plan year on 12/31/07. Logistical challenges and the likelihood of negative tax implications led to the decision not to extend the card past the end of the plan year. Those same issues resulted in the decision to cancel the debit card program for 2008. Unfortunately, our last correspondence to FSA participants mailed in the middle of December erroneously stated that the cards would be de-activated on March 31st, 2008, instead of the correct date of 12/31/07.

So, what does this mean? First, this will only affect those who still have FSA dollars from 2007 and want to use their FSA "EZ Reimburse" debit card. Those employees no longer have that option. But those employees can still use their 2007 dollars for claims incurred through MARCH 15th, 2008 (the end of the IRS grace period). Instead of using the debit card, they will have to file a claim and be reimbursed via check or direct deposit by FBMC. So, for example, if John Q. Metro still has \$800 in his Flexible Spending Account from 2007 and goes to the dentist tomorrow, he can apply those 2007 funds. However, he'll have to pay for the service, file a claim, and be reimbursed by FBMC. If he goes to the dentist on March 16th, 2008, and tries to file a claim, he will NOT be able to use 2007 funds because the IRS grace period will have expired.

How can you help? We're glad you asked. The first thing is to make sure any of your employees who had an FSA in 2007 and have not used all of their funds are aware that they must use those funds by March 15th. Otherwise, those funds will be lost. The second thing is to make sure that your employees who have the debit card know that it is no longer valid. We've already been hearing from employees who have had a rude awakening at the pharmacy/doctor's office/dentist/etc.

We are trying to spread the word through as many channels as we can, but we also know that our HR Coordinators are often the best source of information for those employees we can't reach. Any effort you can give is always appreciated. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Justin Stack at 862-6640 ext. 72248. As always, thanks for your help.

MNPD Wellness Tip-off Tip-off for the week

Eat Heart Smart: Eat fish to help your heart. Eating fish just once or twice a week can significantly reduce the risk of heart attack. The protective value of fish comes from the type of polyunsaturated fatty acids, called omega-3s, found in its oil.

Choose to Move: To boost immunity, exercise regularly and moderately. Though long and intense exercise may actually depress immunity, moderate exercise may boost the body's ability to fight off colds and other illness.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Made Easy, 365 Tips for Better Health, 2005.

***NFD/MNPD Wellness Initiative
Tara Beever, MS and Sarah Vaughn, RD
For more information, please call (615)-340-0466***